



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

JUL 22 2009

OFFICE OF
ENFORCEMENT AND
COMPLIANCE ASSURANCE

Margo Schulze-Haugen
Highly Migratory Species Management Division F/SF1
National Marine Fisheries Service
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
1315 East West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Ms. Schulze-Haugen:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has reviewed the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for Amendment 1 to the Consolidated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Fishery Management Plan (CEQ No. 20090191) in accordance with our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

The purpose of this amendment is to update and revise existing HMS Essential Fish Habitat (EFH), designate a new Habitat area of particular concern (HAPC) for bluefin tuna in the Gulf of Mexico, and analyze fishing and non-fishing impacts on EFH. While we did not raise concerns in our letter regarding the Draft EIS for this amendment, we did include several substantive comments, which we appreciate have been adequately addressed in this Final EIS. We reiterate that, based on our review, we do not have concerns regarding the proposed action.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this FEIS. The staff contact for this review is Aimee Hessert and she can be reached at (202) 564-0993.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Susan E. Bromm".

Susan E. Bromm
Director
Office of Federal Activities

cc: Steve Kokkinakis, NOAA Office of Strategic Planning